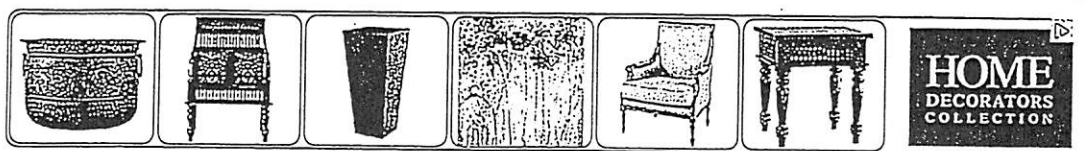


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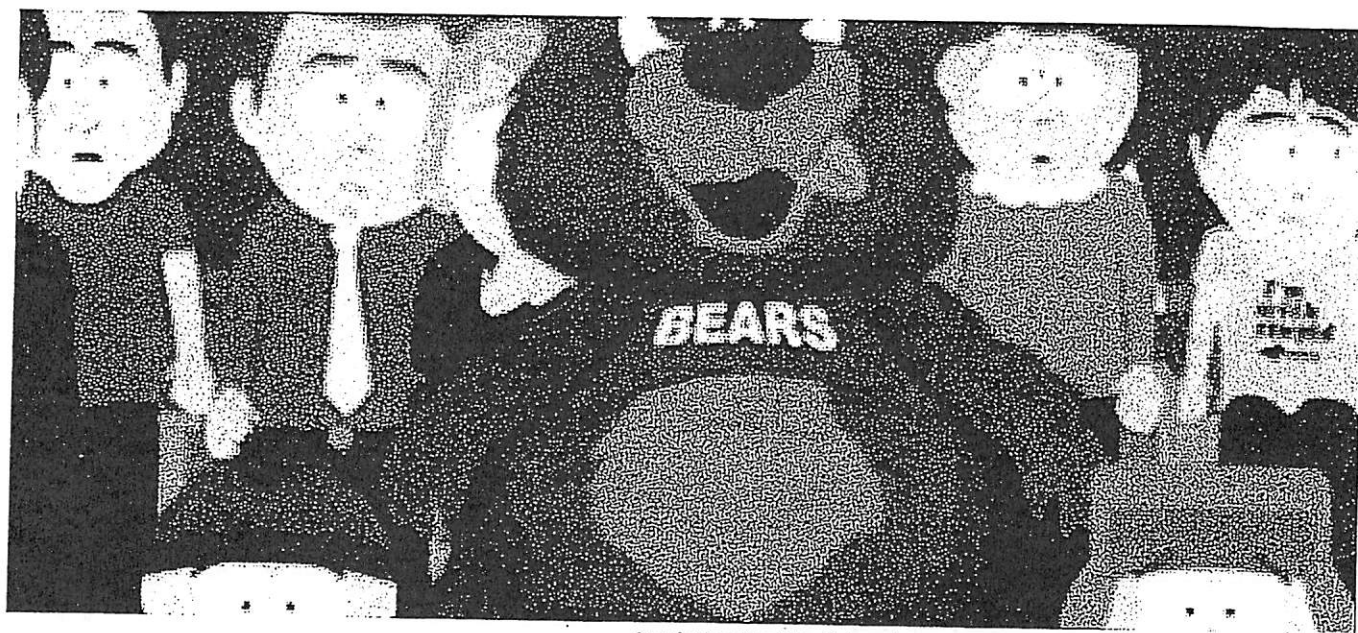
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FEATURE

'South Park': Are Matt Stone and Trey Parker in danger?

The Week Staff



An episode of "South Park" showed the prophet Mohammad dressed in a bear suit. Screenshot

April 30, 2010

Comedy Central has decided to edit out provocative references to the Prophet Mohammed in the satirical cartoon series *South Park*, after a posting on a radical Islamist

EXHIBIT A6



website
raised concerns
that the

show's
co-creators, Trey Parker and Matt Stone, might be in danger. (Watch the
"South Park" creators assure they're not afraid.) Here's a brief overview of
the situation:

What caused the controversy?

The 200th episode of *South Park* — which aired last week — comes rather
close to depicting Mohammad, something
Muslim law forbids
. The Prophet is initially heard speaking from inside a U-Haul trailer, and
later emerges wearing
a bear costume. In the 201st episode, a "CENSORED" box covers what is
said to be the character of Mohammed, and all mentions of his name are
bleeped out.

Who issued the "threat"?

Twenty-year old Muslim convert Zachary Adam
Chesser
, a Virginia resident who now goes by the name
Abu
Talhah
Al-
Amrikee
, found the jokes to be blasphemous. On the website
RevolutionMuslim
.com, he wrote that Parker and Stone would "probably end up" like Theo
van
Gogh
, a Dutch filmmaker who was murdered by a Muslim extremist in 2004.
His post included the home addresses of both Parker and Stone. Later,
Chester told Fox News his message was "not a threat," but that the killing of
the *South Park* creators "really is a likely outcome."

Why would he say that?

In the view of many hard-line Muslims, the Koran holds that anyone who
insults Mohammed must be executed. That was why Iran's Ayatollah
Ruhollah
Khomeini
issued a *fatwa*

, or Islamic religious ruling, calling for the death of author

Salman

Rushdie. The ayatollah said Rushdie had insulted Islam's founder in his

novel

The Satanic Verses. The *fatwa* was eased in 1998, after Rushdie spent years in hiding.

So is there a *fatwa* against Trey Parker and Matt Stone?

No, at least not officially. But a basic principle in Islamic scripture — called "commanding right and forbidding wrong" — "obligates Muslim males to police behavior seen to be wrong and personally deal out the appropriate punishment as stated in scripture,"

says former Dutch legislator

Ayaan

Hirsi

Ali, in

The Wall Street Journal

. Ali says

Amrikee's

Web post

amounts to "an unofficial *fatwa*."

Is there a consensus that the *South Park* creators are in danger?

. No,

says Leslie

Gornstein

at

E! Online

: "The clowns behind RevolutionMuslim.com ... don't even come close to the

Ayatollah's

credibility."

Ibrahim Hooper of the Council of American-Islam relations says the group and its website have "no credibility in the Muslim community."

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